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SOCCER

WORLDWIDE
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Magazine

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**Top Guns
of the
N.S.L.**

Keller,
Blazincic,
Iriarte,
Spiteri &
Moric

*West Adelaide's
Cyrille Ndong-Keller is*

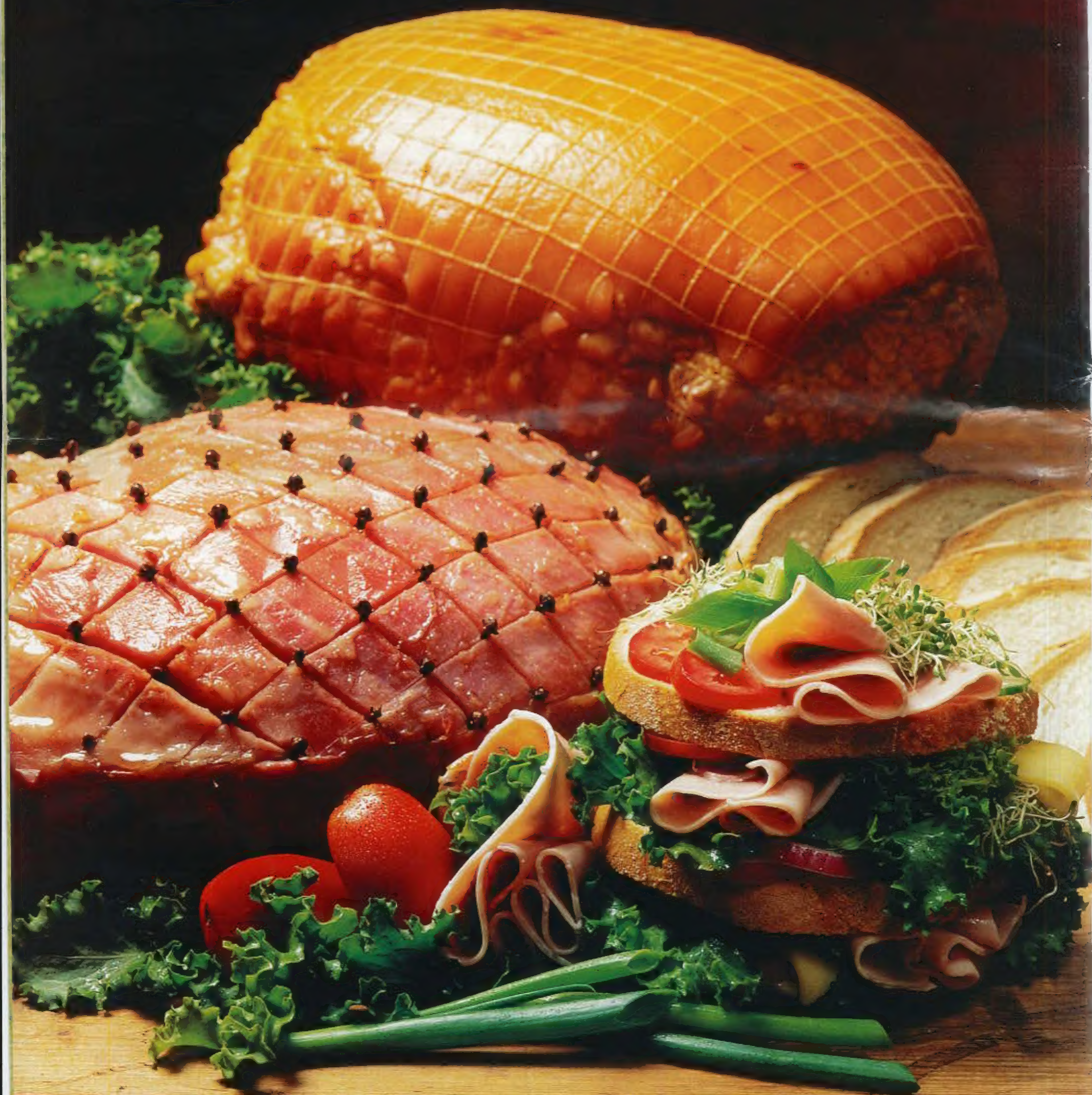
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from the editor

What an exciting period in soccer. Over the last six weeks the game has rarely been out of the headlines. If it hasn't been English soccer hooliganism (and there is nothing new in that) then the Stewart Report, Senate Enquiry, visits by J League clubs and Coca-Cola Socceroo internationals then there has been plenty of buzz in the National Soccer League as well.

They say that there is no such thing as bad publicity and as a guide to the voracity of that statement consider how you reacted to the stories about bribery in cricket. Personally, I found them fascinating and found myself glued to coverage that I would normally have ignored. I can only imagine that non-soccer addicts have viewed the soccer press with similar curiosity. It also proves that when there is a good story our tabloid newspapers will also give soccer prominent space.

Now, I can sit back and wait for the deluge of letters coming in to tell me just how wrong I am, that the bad press will be the downfall of our sport - that's what I like about this game, it is one of such diverse opinion.

The hard thing throughout all of these various incidents is remaining a neutral and detached stance. After all, this magazine, which is the flagship of the soccer media industry, is expected to be objective at all times while maintaining a predominantly 'player-story' base. Sometimes that is very hard to do but it is that stance, as well as the high-calibre photography and journalism, which separates this magazine from the rest.

There is also truth in another saying: that he who lives by the sword, dies by the sword. Take away the S and you can have little sympathy for those who have been garrotted lately in the soccer press - both print and TV. You can't always be dishing it out, you must be prepared for others to grab their chance and hit back when the opportunity arises.

But one of the most enjoyable features of recent weeks has been the performance of the new boys in the Coca-Cola Socceroo. Gabriel Mendez, Danny Tiatto and Tony Popovic all added to their reputations by impressive appearances against Colombia and Japan. National coach Eddie Thomson must be delighted that these young players have made the big jump up from NSL to national team.

And while Thomson will be smiling to himself, Les Scheinflug is absolutely preening. His Coca-Cola Young Socceroo gave Japan such a comprehensive hiding that they must be a good bet for the 1995 World Youth Cup - wherever and whenever it is played.

In this issue you will read the comments of others about our youth development system which is rated as one of the finest in the world. Now the results are being seen on a higher stage, the long years of development are over.

frontcover

He's tall, black, has shocking dreadlocks - and the West Ad fans love him, particularly his growing band of girl followers. But the football buffs also have a soft spot for a player who plays with that Latin flair which makes him just a bit special. He is Cyrille Ndong-Keller.

Turn to page 12 and 13 for a profile on him and other Top Guns of West Adelaide S.C.

next month

NEXT MONTH in Soccer Australia: Alan Davidson talks about the standard of the game in Australia and Malaysia and what he would do if he could wave his magic wand.

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a soccer phenomenon

One of the changes in soccer in the 90s is the amount of young people now coming to games. Maybe in the 50s, 60s and 70s, and maybe still into the 80s, soccer was seen as an older person's sport but that is all changing now. Across the country the supporters groups are growing at a rapid rate, packed with youngsters, some of them not even in their teens.

Adelaide City has its Zebras, Marconi its Stallions, Sydney United has the BBB and South Melbourne has the Pirates, and so does Sydney Olympic. They sing, they chant, they dance ... and if they don't clap when the opposition score a goal then nobody really expects them too anymore. What they bring to soccer is COLOUR, and colour in a big way.

Behind the goal at South Melbourne the Pirates take particular pride in baiting the opposing goalkeeper, taunting him with jibes about his family or poor form - anything to put him off so that the beloved Blues might gain an advantage. And it is the same right across the country.

The surprising thing about these groups is that they sing songs borrowed directly from English soccer's 'Match of the Day', even more surprising considering that not one of these clubs has an Anglo background. But the songs fit in well with their day out at the football - just as it does in London, Manchester or Birmingham where the weather is a lit-

It is common place in Europe where singing and chanting is part of the colour of the game but in Australia it is only just starting to kick off, partly fuelled by the growth of supporters groups and partly by the huge growth that the round ball game is currently experiencing.

Bruce Campbell reports.



been complimented on our all-black outfit."

Sydney United have also gone to town at home with their red, white and blue designer strip which is custom made for leisure wear. It is just an example of the willingness of sporting giants like Puma to join the growing soccer phenomenon and it is paying off handsomely at the cash register.

Now it is more common to see youths - and not just boys - wearing soccer shirts in downtown Brisbane, Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne than baseball shirts, the craze which swept the leisure market last season.

It seems that this year's fad is soccer - and the NSL clubs are starting to cash in in a big way. As the crowds get bigger, and this season has seen a



tle less kind, even if the support is considerably larger.

The phenomenon has seen the adoption of a 'uniform', with the soccer shirt now being almost mandatory wear. Not necessarily the shirt of the supported club but anyone which is considered colourful and bright.

Australian clubs haven't been slow to latch onto this potential sales area and clubs like Sydney United have led the way with their stylish home and away strips. "We wanted to have an away strip like Manchester United's," says Sydney United's Mark Jukic. "But I think that ours even looks slightly better. We have also added our sponsor Puma around the trim, and it really looks great. Everywhere we go we have



healthy growth in NSL attendances, so the colour of the game grows. It may not be Old Trafford, the Bernabeu or Ibrox, but Australian grounds are slowly starting to catch on. That has brought the inevitable problem of crowded trouble and the perennial flare throwing but ask any soccer administrator whether he wants to tackle these problems or empty grounds.

"It is a fact of life today," adds Sydney United's Mark Jukic. "As the crowds grow, then the problems also escalate. But we just have to learn to educate our crowds. We can have the fun without the violence. Flare throwing has to go, it is too dangerous. But the singing and chanting - they can bring that to the Sydney Croatian Sports Centre anytime." ●

World Cup 2002

Now that the huffing and puffing is all over there are three confirmed bids for the 2002 World Cup. Mexico has officially joined the expected bids from South Korea and Japan, although from an Australian point of view a preference would have to go to the bids of our Asian neighbours.

For once, Australia (if we can qualify) would have many of the advantages that have been denied to us over the last thirty years. It is even more imperative, therefore, that the Coca-Cola Socceroos qualify for France. We will need the experience of that competition to go a stage better in 2002.

Maybe a quarter or semi final appearance by then could be a realistic target? This is the stuff that dreams are made of.

Up and Down

The uncertainty of life in the National Soccer League is a vexing problem. We were all led to believe that a two year stabilisation period was being enforced before teams from Perth and Canberra joined to make it a 16 club league in 1995 - despite almost non-stop talk about 10, 12, 13 or even 18 teams.

Now the latest 'hot rumour' is that the bottom placed club is going to be

relegated. With all the goings-on in soccer administration these days no-one will either confirm or deny this story. And a new twist in the Perth saga - they want to delay an entry until 1996.

It is really time we put out a solid business plan for the NSL and charted the years when the league will be expanded. Let's make new ground and announce a Five Year Plan in time for the 1995/96 season - and then stick to it.

No More Coca-Cola Socceroos

I don't know even know why it is worth more than the odd line or two in the reader's letters section of any publication - but it seems to have become something of a minor talking point (nothing else is major in these days of the Stewart/Senate enquiry).

The nicknaming of our national team as the Socceroos, with the addition of the sponsorship appellation of Coca-Cola is being knocked in certain quarters. It is certainly the role of the press to highlight public feeling - but it is also their role to act responsibly. The simple fact is that the name 'Socceroo' is a very marketable commodity and Coca-Cola, one of the world's biggest companies, recognises that fact by pouring in millions of dollars to be asso-

ciated with those naming rights.

It is a good name, and easily identified with Australia. In this case, who cares what other countries are doing - they don't pay our very expensive national team bills. So that's it - and no letters, please.

Dream Team

The entry to our Dream Team competition (Soccer Australia Issue 14) has been excellent. So good, in fact, that we have decided to do a special feature in our next issue. The volume of entries has also prompted a decision to add a few more prizes including Mitre soccer balls, Soccer Australia T Shirts and Coca-Cola Supporters Packs.

If you want to add your name to the barrel simply send in your favourite all-time Australian selection and we'll announce the prizes in our next issue.

Country Ratings

How can Australia be rated 47th, 57th or even 100th by FIFA - Surely these ratings tables are meaningless trivia invented by a bored clerk in Zurich? There is only one true rating and that is the World Cup. Why should the world governing body denigrate their own championship by possibly relegating their World Champion because of a lack of games.

Maybe soccer will end up the way of boxing whereby the World Champion is stripped of its title because it didn't play the number 2 challenger. Or what about a rival FISA, or ISSA or WFC - it sounds stupid, but it has happened in boxing simply because of a stupid rating system. And, of course, greed.

Both, sadly, are now day to day ingredients of the beautiful game on a world stage.

Prize of the Month

All too often our men in the middle (I can't call them the men in 'black' anymore because now they wear pink, yellow or green) are slagged for mediocre performances. So it's nice to say 'well done' to the newest member of the NSL Referees Panel.

Eddie Lennie, now based in Perth after officiating in Scotland, has gained a lot of friends with his free-flowing style of refereeing. Maybe we will soon be able to see his talent at the Grand Final, Cup Final - or even a recommendation to the FIFA list.

Australian soccer has another star, this time he doesn't score the goals - he only makes sure that they are put away fairly. ●

Alan Davidson lives the life that many of us only ever dream about - yet he came back to Australia to help out an old club, South Melbourne, in dire need. Now back in Malaysia with his club Pahang, Bruce Campbell caught up with the mega-star that most call the

The King Of Malaysia

Australia has produced a string of talented players over the last two decades but few of them have ever displayed the class of Alan Davidson. In his early days in the National League, Davidson was a revelation, one of the first truly class Australian-born players. His move to English club Nottingham Forest proved to be a door-opener to many of his countrymen in the ten years that have followed while David himself has come the opposite way, returning to Australia for another spell with South Melbourne and then Melbourne Knights before heading for the riches of the M League, Asia's newest all-professional set-up.

"Three years ago I thought that I would go to Malaysia for a few months and find out what it was all about and then come back home," Davidson remembers. "Ken Worden, who had been my coach at Melbourne Knights, took me over there to play for Pahang - and I'm still there.

"In the end I had to sell my business in Australia because I just couldn't keep it going from Pahang and now I have just signed a two year extension to my contract.

"It's funny the way things work out as well, because Ken Worden went on to become the National Coach of Malaysia, beating Australia 1-0 in his time in the job, before taking up the State job as coach of Singapore."

Football also has a funny way of taking strange corners, something that Davidson has found out all through his



playing career. At one time he looked to be set for a long and successful career in England with Forest, only to have that cut short by a serious back injury, and then he had the possibility of becoming the first Aussie to play in the J League - but he turned that one down.

"I had an offer to go to Sanfrecce by their Scottish coach, Stuart Baxter," he says. "But I decided to stay, which is maybe just as well because Sanfrecce later sacked Baxter."

The English experience is one thing that he will never regret. "It is something I always wanted to do," says Davidson. "I proved that I could play with the best of them in the best league in the world. I have absolutely no regrets about my time

in England - I could have spent the rest of my life wondering whether I was good enough or not - now I know that I was.

"Now I'm trying to put something back into the game, maybe that is one of the reasons why I am successful here. Often the foreign imports get found out because they only come for the money. A lot of them have milked the system but I want to put something back into the game.

"I was asked to take over as coach at Pahang but I would rather play for the next couple of seasons. But coaching is definitely something I want to try my hand at and I have accepted the Assistant Coach's role at the club.

"But who knows what will happen

in the future, two years is a long time in soccer and I prefer to keep my options open. When I was seventeen and just starting out with South Melbourne I was given some very good advice by Alun Evans, the former Liverpool star. He said 'the most important thing at the end of your career is what the game has done for you, what have you got out of it.'

"Too many players walk away with nothing except a collection of injuries and a medal or two. But the game has been very kind to me. I don't depend upon it and instead play because I love the game. I could do without football - there are other things much more important to me, like my family and life itself. Football isn't there for ever but a lot of players don't even think about life after football.

"Life is full of ups and downs, but from a personal point of view I am well satisfied. As things change then so do your goals, I am content with life."

Davidson is also regarded as one of the bright new breed of footballer, one who has a definite future in the game when he finally does hang his boots up - if he chooses that direction. But at 34, and with two years of a playing contract still to run, the classy defender has time to decide which direction he will then take. One thing is certain, though - the man who has played nearly 300 NSL games for South Melbourne and the Knights has a lot more to offer football. And who is to say that the King of Malaysia may not yet grace the NSL one more time? ●

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Canberra Cosmos a can of worms?

At the February AGM of the ASF a motion to remove the minimum number (14) of NSL clubs didn't get off the floor. That leaves a number of possibilities for next season's structure. Soccer Australia looks at some of the possibilities and whether the Canberra entry opens up a whole new NSL can of worms.

Thirteen is an unlucky number for most and it looks very much like that the odd-number game in the National Soccer League will be over next season. The bye round has caused widespread dissatisfaction amongst the clubs with the planned 'exhibition' matches in country areas almost non-existent. Some time back the Australian Soccer Federation extended an invitation to teams from Canberra and Perth to apply for league membership, and it looks as if one of those teams will make the big step up in time for the start of the new season in October. Add to that the news that the Newcastle Breakers roadshow is up and running again and it is good news for soccer fans in Australia.

The Canberra bid was officially launched a few weeks back at a high powered presentation masterminded by media guru, Bruce Glen. He was one of the brains behind the brilliant World Youth Cup, the man who brought the elephant into the 'It's Big' campaign. "Things seem to be coming well together in the behind-the-scenes move for a bid by Canberra," said Glen. "I am pleased with our presentation." But off the pitch Canberra has been rocked by a well-publicised rift between local factions. In a late move a motion was even posted to unseat the ACTSF administration with details not resolved as Soccer Australia went to press.

Despite all that, there is such a strong lobby for inclusion by a Canberra team that it seems inevitable that the newly-named Canberra Cosmos will take their place for the 1995/96 season. Details like coach, players, player contracts, major sponsor and even home ground are still unconfirmed although it

is expected that the new team will play at Bruce Stadium, the old stamping ground of the now-local league Canberra City.

In Perth things seem to be going at a steadier pace with the Arena consortium which is responsible for the WA team asking for a one-season deferment for their entry. This delay would allow Perth time to consolidate their financial position, a major concern considering the financial collapse of the Perth Kangaroos so soon after their entry into the Singapore Super League. But the talent that the Kangaroos were able to field in winning that league, after a rescue package was put together, shows that they are in a far stronger position than their cousins in Canberra. Rumours persist that Wynton Rufer, now playing in the J League with JEF United, will join forces with the Perth side who also expect to land former Aussie keeper, Robert Zabica.

The most definite of the moves for league inclusion seems to be the re-entry of the Newcastle Breakers. General Manager Pat Clarke is convinced that this time round the Novocastrians will get it right. "We have got the financial side sorted out," he said, "and Newcastle has always been a strong base for soccer. There isn't any doubt that we could put together a competitive team now that we have a tight financial package. We also have excellent facilities and one of the best stadiums in Australia."

Should Newcastle be re-admitted, and former ASF Chairman John Constantine was a strong supporter of that possibility, then that would bring the NSL up to 14 clubs - unless, of course, there is relegation. Shortly before his resignation from the top spot ➤



The new Broom

The Australian Soccer Federation under its new Chairman, David Hill, will be more efficient, more accountable, more entrepreneurial, more responsive to those it serves and above all, more visionary. Laurie Schwab reports.

It will not squander money on consultants for work its own staff should be doing.

And its key personnel will be available to answer queries from the press and the ASF's constituents, instead of being constantly "in meetings" or otherwise unavailable.

Hill, 48, former head honcho of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, made all this clear in the days before and after being elected to the ASF board vacancy and his subsequent elevation to the chairmanship.

Within days, he had appointed an interim administrator, pending the appointment of a new, high-powered chief executive officer. The position was to be advertised nation-wide, with a head-hunting agency engaged as part of the selection process.

The new CEO, unlike the incumbent, Ian Holmes, will not be one of the ASF commissioners. This will leave room for another board member from the states.

Hill is likely to be followed onto the board by television journalist George Negus as a replacement for one of the co-opted independent commissioners, Rodney Adler and Alan Rydge, when their terms expire later this year.

Other newcomers on the board are former Morwell Falcons president Dom DiFabrizio who recently won an election against fellow Victorian John Dimtsis and the new NSL chairman, George Vasilopoulos of South Melbourne, who has succeeded Tony Labbozzetta.

"These men represent a new beginning for Australian soccer," Hill said.

He added that clear policies would be drawn up for the national coaching staff and that an honorary national team manager would be appointed. This person would be at arm's length from the coaching staff and deal with matters such as tour logistics.

Hill suggested that had a proper national team management structure been in place at the time, some of the contentious matters brought up in the Stewart Inquiry might have been avoided.

He added: "It is unpardonable that our national coaches have apparently been operating without signed con-

tracts. Rectifying that is an urgent priority."

He repeated that no evidence existed to support the Stewart report's recommendation that Socceroo coach Eddie Thomson should be sacked. Various aspects of Stewart's recommendations had been "over the top," he said.

He had spoken to senators involved in the separate Senate inquiry into the sport and told them: "Whatever you intend to do, do it now. An ongoing inquiry such as this does nothing but harm to the sport and to the reputations of individuals."

To improve communication, the way he did while president of North Sydney Rugby League Club, Hill said he would introduce a regular newsletter to the ASF's constituents.

He also would alternate board meetings between various capital cities, to dispel the perception that all decision-making power was restricted to Sydney.

While he is aware that the league strongly opposes moves by the players' union to abolish the transfer fee system, he said: "We've got to take heed of whether or not transfer fees would withstand legal challenge."

The size of the NSL next season and beyond would be determined once he had had the chance to discuss the matter with those involved. To those who advocate a reduced national league, Hill had the message that streamlining was no guarantee of success. "In every league, no matter what its size, you will have those who dominate and those who struggle," he said.

To slow down the drain of Australian soccer talent to Europe, the ASF had to move towards full-time professionalism for at least the best domestic players, by contribution somehow towards their income.

Although SBS held the television rights to Australian soccer, Hill believed that the ASF was in a position to negotiate for exposure on pay TV. This would become an important revenue source eventually but initially, the federation should not commit itself to one carrier for longer than three years.

Hill's ascension to the chairmanship was confirmed the previous evening when the National League decided to throw all its 16 votes behind

► Constantine said: "There is always a place for Newcastle in this league, they are a part of Australian soccer history."

Relegation isn't an issue this season - BUT each team has to re-apply at the end of the season for their place. This allows the NSL to monitor the clubs' performances both on and off the park and while there has been criticism in the past the ASF hasn't been tough enough, the indications are there that the membership criteria will be more strictly enforced from now on. That was the reason behind the establishment of floodlighting by Melbourne Knights and Heidelberg United this season and one of the motives behind the abortive attempt to remove the 14

minimum club rule. Should Canberra fail to make the grade, as is unlikely, and Perth fail to confirm their application, which is very likely, then that would mean that the present member clubs are all safe by virtue of the 14 minimum club rule.

But should Canberra Cosmos join the league after a nine year absence from national capital representation then a whole new can of worms could be opened. Will the clubs vote for a 15 team league, another unsatisfactory odd number. Instead it could mean the non re-admittance of one of the present teams, with a lot of fingers pointing at a certain Melbourne club. ●

him.

He is believed to have received Queensland's five votes after the election candidate from that state, Ian Brusasco, withdrew from the contest on the Friday night.

Suddenly, Hill, the former ABC chief, had more than 33 per cent of the total vote, quite apart from the support he had been pledged by the so-called minor state and regional federations.

But it was the NSL that helped push him decisively over the line.

The NSL's decision to vote as a bloc was a reflection of the league's determination to regain some of the decision-making power it had lost to the ASF board of commissioners since the league lost its own management committee.

Heidelberg president Peter Tsaklis remarked: "If the clubs act individually, people will walk all over them. But if they stick together they've got power - and we're determined to use that power on all issues."

The vote was for a vacancy on the board created when its previous chairman, John Constantine, resigned under pressure from the states over the ASF's handling of the Stewart inquiry.

Going into the election, Hill made a final mental check of the numbers and declared: "I only deal in certainties." He won that election, against Jack Reilly of Victoria and Peter Gray of NSW, with an estimated 70 per cent majority on the first ballot.

Hill, 48, played soccer as a boy in England before coming to Australia with his family at the age of 12. He played rugby league for Sydney University and North Sydney until a fourth knee reconstruction ended his career.



It was in 1972 that he returned to soccer, albeit in the less demanding amateur ranks. He still plays socially on Sunday mornings in the company of former Pan Hellenic and Adelaide Croatia star Charlie Perkins and one-time Socceroo goalkeeper Frank Hearn among others.

Hill said his favourite moments in Australian soccer were Australia's Charlie Yankos-inspired 4-1 victory over Argentina in Sydney in 1988 and marking - or at least trying to mark - George Best in a charity match in Melbourne about three years ago. Best scored a hat-trick.

In the ASF hierarchy, Hill renews his association with the federation's non-voting president, Neville Wran, who was NSW Premier while Hill was chief executive of the NSW Railways.

Hill's predecessors as ASF chairman were Dr Henry Seamonds (1961-63), Sir William Walkley (1963-69), Sir Arthur George (1969-1988), Ian Brusasco (1988-90), John Constantine (1990-1995). ●

david hill ► a biography

Bachelor of Economics and a Master of Economics (1971) from Sydney University.

Finance journalist and economics consultant in Sydney and London in the 1970's.

Senior Economics Advisor to the New South Wales Commission of New South Wales from 1976 to 1980.

Commissioner of the Public Transport Commission of New South Wales in 1979

Chief Executive of the New South Wales Rail Authority from 1980-1986

David Hill was appointed Managing Director of the ABC from 1 December 1986 and held the position until 1 March 1995, having relinquished the position of eleventh Chairman of the ABC after serving in that capacity from 24 July 1986.

Other Appointments

Fellow of the Senate of the University of Sydney, 1983-1986.

Commissioned to conduct the Inquiry into Transport Services to the Northern

Territory, 1983-1984.

Director on the Board of Australian Airlines, 1984-1986.

President of the North Sydney Rugby League Football Club, 1989-1992.

Member of the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, New York, 1989-1995.

Director of the Board of Visnews Limited, 1992-1993.


Trustee of Reuters Television, 1993-1994.

Member of the Executive of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, 1989-1995.

Member of the Executive of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, 1986-1995.

Played soccer in England as a child and returned to play soccer after playing Rugby League. He has played soccer regularly for the past twenty years.

David Hill continues to play a wide range of sport, including soccer. ●



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Beyond the Call

The Souness files

Graeme Souness is acknowledged as one of the finest midfielders since the war. In a star-packed career he played for Middlesbrough, Liverpool, Sampdoria and Glasgow Rangers, winning 54 caps for Scotland and playing in two World Cup finals. Recently he spent time in Australia but before jetting back to Europe he spoke to Soccer Australia about some of the issues of his career and soccer in general.

On Australia ...

"I came here again last year and re-kindled a lot of old friendships. I love the country and the lifestyle of this country. In a perfect world I would like to live here for a few months of the year and in Europe the rest. But I've got a family by my first marriage and that is very important to me."

On Australian Soccer ...

Obviously I have spoken to people about soccer in this country. I think that it does need help and if you look at the standard of the younger players it is very high. Maybe they get to a certain age and think that there is nowhere for them to go."

On His Links With Aussie Players ...

"I was asked last year to arrange for a few Australian players to trial with clubs in Europe. The reports that came back on those players were very good. I feel that the football played in Britain is different to that played anywhere else in the world. Like going anywhere, it takes time to adjust. British football is also more physically demanding. But I believe that the natural athleticism of Australian players would help them to adjust to those standards. I think that the young player trying to make the jump from playing at school to that high level, and retaining the desire to play at that standard, is where Australia needs some help."

On Coaching ...

"My knowledge in coaching is really at the top end, in dealing with senior players. That is where I am most happy. Unfortunately there are other issues to deal with in managing a club in England. Maybe I wasn't so successful in those areas."

On Tottenham Hotspur ...

"I played in a very successful youth team at Spurs. We won the National Youth Cup and every other cup that the team could have played for. I left Tottenham when I was 19. I felt that I was good enough to be playing in the first team and I told Bill Nicholson, the manager, that every week. In the end he got fed up with me and sold me to Middlesbrough for thirty thousand pound."

On Middlesbrough and Jack Charlton ...

"When I went to Middlesbrough I didn't even know where it was. But I went there and came under the managership of Jack Charlton. Like most 19 year-olds I felt that I had seen everything, knew everything and done everything. But he soon showed me that I hadn't and I was fortunate enough to work under him. I can remember the conversation with him vividly when he told me that there was two doors for me. He said that I had the ability to be a very good footballer and go through one door or go through the other one and achieve nothing, be a part-

time footballer and a playboy. Fortunately, I met the right person at the right time."

On The Liverpool Success Story ...

"There was a great rivalry between Manchester United and Liverpool and Joe Jordan had set the British transfer record when he went to Old Trafford. So Liverpool paid two thousand pound more so that they would hold the record. I had four years there. There was never any secret about Liverpool's success. It all stemmed from older players teaching younger players good habits both on and off the pitch. Bob Paisley never had to do or say anything, the hard work had already been done. If the players weren't doing it on a Saturday then it was the players who sorted it out. He would only come in occasionally when it wasn't working. Paisley would say to Joe Fagan, so that we could hear, that 'they were a bunch of bastards today, he wasn't doing this and he wasn't doing that.' The players would then take over and sort things out amongst themselves. In the most successful teams it is the players who sort things out. It is the same at Manchester United."

On The Motivators ...

"Emlyn Hughes wasn't the most popular of players at that time but he was a tremendous influence on the team. Ray Clemence was also one of those players who just didn't like to lose. I like to think that I learnt from most people and that when I became a senior player that I also passed on things. There were times when Kenny Dalglish and I had to be kept apart at half time. That might not sound professional but it is an indication of the desire that we both had to win. That never happened at Anfield - we always won there!"

On The Hard Man Image ...

"I think that the press always have to look for something different. I like to think that the people who came to see me thought that I was a player. In life, whether it is business or football, the ones who are successful are those who can adapt. No game of football is the same, you could play one game where it is lovely football without a lot of tackling and then you could play an FA Cup tie when it was all aggression and tackling. Teams that are successful are the ones that can adapt better than any other, and I like to think that I was capable of adapting."

On Going To Glasgow Rangers ...

"They were in trouble when I arrived. They hadn't won the championship in ten years and their gate had dropped to 17,000. When I left the average gate was 44,000 and they had won four championships and five cups. In the European Cup we were only ever beaten by good teams."

On His Decision to Leave Glasgow Rangers ...

"I think that without a doubt that there are times when I have regretted leaving Ibrox. But I've always been one for a challenge and I had already turned Liverpool down twice and when the third offer came in I said, 'OK, I'll go down and talk'. Within a year of taking that job I had open-heart surgery and I have to be honest and say that that had an effect on me, that maybe it diminished some of the fire that I had for the game. If I had known that I was going to have a heart operation I would never have left Glasgow Rangers. It would have been very easy for me then, after having had five successful years, to have taken a less high profile position within the club."

On Rumours Of Bust-Ups with Rangers Scoring Legend, Ally McCoist ...

"That is a myth. I'm sure that if Ally was sitting here that he would agree. I just felt that with him he needed to be kept on his toes. He is a big personality and is loved by everybody. But I felt that every now and then he just need a little knock on the head."

On His Departure From Anfield ...

"I felt that there were people at Liverpool who didn't have the desire to succeed. I never had to separate any of the players that I managed at Liverpool at half time. I never had to step in and stop an argument between players. Maybe in retrospect I wouldn't have made changes so quickly but things happen. I had players who no longer wanted to be there and maybe I should have insisted on them seeing out their contracts but I have always worked on the premise that if you don't want to be at the club, then go."

On The Liverpool Players ...

"Robbie Fowler has got incredible talent. If he handles it correctly then he could be better than Ian Rush. Jamie Redknapp is still learning the game. He plays in a position, centre midfield, where you have to do a bit more thinking. I won't criticise, but he is still learning. I believe that in that position you play your best football when you get to 30. McManaman is fantastic on his day - he just glides past players. So far he hasn't been consistent, but he has a great future - he is still a boy. These players are 20, 21 and they are stars - they are household names around the world and it is how they handle that. Being a player at Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal or Tottenham means that there is a tremendous spotlight on you. In the past you were allowed to develop without the spotlight, but that isn't going to happen in this day."

On Developing Technique ...

"I believe that when you are a kid you have to touch the ball as much as possi-



ble. That is what indoor soccer is all about and that helps to develop your game. In the outdoor game you must have good touch and control and good athleticism. Kids don't want to touch the ball every three minutes, they want it at their feet all the time. If you can play indoor soccer all the time you must have good touch and control."

On His Desire to be Involved as a Manager Again ...

"I've had a year out of it now. But I don't miss the day to day involvement. My previous job (at Liverpool) left me with a bad taste in my mouth. I never talk about jobs that have someone already in them. I am very much interested in soccer but I won't talk about a job that isn't up for grabs. If I go back to football then it will be in a football job. I think managing at international level would be interesting."

On Bruce Grobbelaar ...

"I've played with Bruce (for Liverpool), I've shared a room with him on occasions and I would hate to think that their was any truth in those stories (about taking bribes to fix matches) and I refuse to believe it."

On Eric Cantona ...

"At Old Trafford the players call him 'Magic'. During a game you would hear the Man Utd bench shouting 'just give it to Magic'. He is an incredibly talented player."

On Agents and Middlemen ...

"If you are a good player today and if you either are managed or manage your own money correctly, then by the time you are thirty you wouldn't have to do too much after that - you're life is taken care of. Agents have jacked up the price, but like everything in life there is good and there is bad. An agent now can get a player far more money."

On the State of the Modern Game ...

"You only have to visit a lot of grounds in Britain today. Manchester United and Glasgow Rangers both have great stadiums. There are some clubs whose grounds are still average but they are outside of the Premier League. Twenty odd years ago Glasgow Rangers had a disaster when 90 odd people died and they decided to re-do their stadium. At that time they were so far ahead of the rest of the clubs yet they still decided to update." ●

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Joe Spiteri: The spitfire

When Joe Spiteri went north to Parramatta Eagles from Victorian State League side Albion Bruce Campbell nicknamed him 'The Spitfire'. The name stuck and now one year on he is causing havoc in the deadliest attack in the National Soccer League. At Melbourne Knights Joe Spiteri has teamed up with Mark Viduka - and the deadly duo have shot the Knights to Championship favouritism with their feats of daring-do.

He is quick, sharp where it counts in the penalty box and also has a dig on him which would keep a mule happy. He is the kid that everybody thought wouldn't make it but Joe Spiteri has proven them all wrong. Parramatta coach Rale Rasic will be the first to admit that Spiteri didn't over impress him when he watched the player in action at Albion. "But he was so strongly recommended," says Rasic, "that I decided to sign him."

"And he proved a very good buy for the Eagles."

In that first season Spiteri linked up with Marshall Soper to score a lot of goals in his rookie season, not a bad effort in a side which didn't make the Top Six. But what he did learn at Parramatta was how to sniff out the half chance, learning from the master himself, Magic Marshall.

That form earned him a call-up into the Coca Cola Olyroos where he even managed to outshine his future team mates at the Knights, Mark Viduka and Adrian Cervinski, and in the process add national coaches Eddie Thomson and Les Scheinflug to his list of admirers. "Spiteri looks a good bet for the full international team some time in the future," says Thomson. "I have already promoted Viduka and feel confident that Spiteri will get his chance in the future also."

That might see Spiteri eventually competing with Viduka for a place in Thomson's plans for France '98 as the coach is a strong exponent of the spiral attacking system.

"I like to use one striker," explains the national boss, "with two wide midfielders adding support, much like old-fashioned inside forwards and Aurelio Vidmar and Robbie Slater are perfect in that role."

When Spiteri moved back to his home town of Melbourne in a \$17,000 transfer his Coca-Cola Olyroo team-mate Adrian Cervinski found himself relegated to the substitute's bench - before going on loan to Wollongong in a bid to secure first team football. Now, according to some pundits, Spiteri is starting to outshine Mark Viduka in many ways too.

"We have the best attack in Australia," says Knights coach Mirko Bazic, who at one time earlier this season also had Ollie Pondeljak waiting in the wings as well as the want-away Cervinski. "I have quite a few options in my forward line but I can't see any other team in Australia coming anywhere near us in this department. Viduka is an exceptional talent but Spiteri is also a very fine striker. They are still young players and will only improve even further with experience."

Both players are exceptional talents with the only major difference being their rate of development. Mark Viduka has

been earmarked from an early age as a star while Joe Spiteri's rise has been nothing short of meteoric. In the space of just two seasons the Spitfire has gone from unwanted State League player to one of the hottest properties in the National Soccer League.

Europe might well be his next port of call. ●



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Only a couple of football clubs in Australia are a century old, and there aren't even many fifty years old either. There are certainly none in the National Soccer League - except West Adelaide which rather curiously has kept quiet about its true age for quite some time.

West Adelaide

It is normal practice when amalgamating to claim the ancestry of both partners, with the oldest also being the foundation date. In Australia businesses are constantly gobbling up smaller firms just to be able to say 'Founded in 1910'. But that hasn't been the case in Adelaide where West has generally been regarded in the soccer history books as having kicked their first ball in 1961. However, 1961 was the date of the amalgamation of the Hellenic and Athletic Soccer Club (originally formed as Olympic in 1945) and West Adelaide, which dated back to 1910 with Hindmarsh Stadium as its home ground.

From 1962 onwards West Adelaide achieved enormous success in the South Australian State League and in 1977, along with its city of churches rival, Adelaide City, became founder members of the National Soccer League. A golden era in the club's history was crowned the following year when it won the 1978 Australian Championship.

Today, West Adelaide is recognised as one of the most exciting combinations in Australia with an attacking brand of football and style all of its own. Coach Raul Blanco's expertise entitles him to run the playing aspects in his own fashion with the full backing of the club's administration. In turn Blanco is proud of the respect that his adventurous playing style has brought the team from Hindmarsh Stadium.

One of the club's biggest supporters is George Florentzou, managing director of Distinctive Homes which has been the Sharks major sponsor for the last seven seasons. Like most fans George longs for another national title and intends to continue to support the club which he hopes will become a genuine power in the National League. ●



Jose Luis Iriarte profile

Full Name: Jose Luis Iriarte
Date & Place of Birth: 10 February 1966, Argentina
Current Club: West Adelaide
Position: Striker
First Club: School 23, Avellaneda, Argentina
Previous Clubs: Cipolletti, Esportivo Armenio (both Argentina), Warringah Dolphins (NSW Super League), Sydney United, Pahang (Malaysia)
Favourite Position: Striker
Favourite Ground: Hindmarsh Stadium
Career Highlights: Playing in Malaysia in 1993 for Pahang, Winning NSW State League Gold Medal in 1991, Winning Championship with Cipolletti in 1986
Career Disappointments: Injuries this season - knee injury and broken toe
Biggest Influence on Career: father and Augustus Pascos

Most Admired Player: Maradona
Most Admired Other Sportsman: Andre Agassi
Favourite Food: Pasta, lasagne and BBQ
Favourite Drink: Coke
Ideal Woman: My wife, Marcella
Favourite Movie: The Godfather - 1, 2 and 3
Favourite Actor: Al Pacino
Favourite Actress: Sharon Stone
Favourite Music: Easy Listening
Favourite Holiday Sports: Argentina
Routine Before Game: Relax, watch TV or listen to music and take it easy
Favourite Nightspots: Severa, cafes around Adelaide
Languages Spoken: English & Spanish
What Do You Miss About Home When You Are Away? family & friends
Favourite Clothes: jeans & T-shirts
Ideas About a Romantic Night Out: Good restaurant, good movie, coffee and disco afterwards
Car: Holden Barina
Favourite TV Programme: Sports shows
Soccer Ambitions: To play at the highest level I can and push myself as far as possible ●

Peter Ivan Blazincic profile

Full Name: Peter Ivan Blazincic
Date of Birth: 29/5/69
Place of Birth: Adelaide
School Attended: St Patricks Parks Community Education Centre
First Soccer Club: Adelaide Croatia at age 7
Prev Soccer Clubs: Adelaide Croatia
Current Position: Goalkeeper
Favourite Position: Goalkeeper
Favourite Ground: Sydney Football Stadium
Career Highlights: Being signed up for West Adelaide
Career Disappointments: Shoulder reconstruction last season
Most Memorable Game: In State League playing for Croatia in final against Palomares. Kept clean sheet throughout full time and then throughout penalties
Biggest Influences on Career: Past coaches, Charlie Horvat, Raul Blanco, Mirko Stepic (junior goalkeeping coach)
Most Admired Soccer Player: Zvonimir Boban
Most Admired Sportsperson Outside Soccer: Ayrton Senna
Favourite Food: Pasta
Favourite Drink: Carlton Draught
Ideal Woman: Intelligent, caring, friendly & likes sports
Favourite Movie: Goodfellows
Favourite Actor: Robert de Niro
Favourite Actress: Darryl Hannah
Favourite Music: Pearl Jam, The Cult, Sound Garden
Favourite Soccer Boots: Mondial
Favourite Holiday Spots: Seattle - home of hard rock bands
Routine Before Game: Take dog for walk; get paper; rest; have lunch; listen to music, get more active and then go to game.
Favourite Nightspots: The Grand, Heaven, Waves
Languages Spoken: Croatian, English
What do you miss about home when you are away? My dog Suza
What do you like wearing when you're not wearing soccer strips? Tracksuits, 501's
What's your idea of a romantic night out? Dinner, bottle of wine at the beach
Do you smoke? No
Do you drink? Yes - not very often
Favourite TV Program: Seinfeld
What type of car do you drive? Mazda 929
What is your soccer ambition? To go as far as I can and to play to the best of my ability ●



He's one of the most colourful players in the NSL - and not because he's black. Cyrille Ndongo-Keller has that touch of AFRICAN MAGIC

Johnny Warren has been warning us for years that Africa was the new emerging soccer nation, that by the end of this century they would be jostling for a place in the power game of international football. At youth level Ghana has exploded its talents onto that world stage and Australia has started its own brand of African Magic by importing its first two stars.

Melbourne SC has Ransford Banini, the Ghanaian youth international who blazed the trail as the first native African to play in Australia's semi-pro league, but West Adelaide went one step further when they signed the explosive Cyrille Ndongo-Keller, the man they call African Magic.

He's tall, black, has shocking dreadlocks - and the West Ad fans love him, particularly his growing band of

Cyrille is too hot to handle

girl followers. But the football buffs also have a soft spot for a player who plays with that Latin flair which makes him just a bit special. Under coach Raul Blanco he has really blossomed this season, after a less than spectacular introduction to NSL football at Parramatta.

"I played with Darwin Cubs as well," says Cyrille, "but I have really come on at Adelaide. This team plays very good football and, as a striker, it suits my own style perfectly. People in Cameroon ask me about Australia but I can only tell them how good this country is. I love it here and I wouldn't be surprised to see more African players come to Australia - after all the climate is much better than it is in Europe."

Ndongo-Keller has also proven that playing in Australia hasn't hindered his international chances when he recently became the first ever NSL player to be capped for another country, excluding New Zealand. Now he wants to go on and taste real action in our big league, with his first-ever appearance in a Grand Final.

"That would be nice," he finishes with a big grin. ●

Cyrille Ndongo-Keller profile >

Full Name: Cyrille Ndongo-Keller
Date of Birth: 16/2/74
Place of Birth: Yaounde
School Attended: Government. Bi-Lingual Primary School, Yaounde
First Soccer Club: Tonnerre, Yaounde
Prev Soccer Clubs: Olympic Moolye, Yaounde, Parramatta Eagles, Darwin Cubs.
Current Soccer Club: West Adelaide
Current Position: Striker
Favourite Position: Free Style
Favourite Ground: Maracana, Brazil
Career Highlights: Being discovered on the streets. Selection for Cameroon Youth Team. Competing in African Nations Cup at Youth Level. Participating in the World Youth Cup. Being Selected Best Player, Tonnerre 1992. Becoming the highest scoring player at Tonnerre. Best player and leading goalscorer in Singapore League whilst playing with Darwin Cubs.
Career Disappointments: Facturing my arm at 15. Not being selected for USA 1994.
Most Memorable Game: In Cameroon, big derby Tonnerre - scored both goals, 2-1 against Aigle of Konsamba.
Biggest Influences on Career: Brother, Samuel Ndonga-Keller, who used to coach me.
Most Admired Soccer Player: Ruud Geul't Roger Milla
Most Admired Sportsperson Outside Soccer: Mohammed Ali
Favourite Food: Cameroonian Dish - M'ondo

and Noodle (made from flour and vegetable roots, encased in leaves and boiled) - we don't have the ingredients in Australia!

Favourite Drink: Lemon Squash

Ideal Woman: One with a beautiful heart who understands life

Favourite Movie: Basic Instinct

Favourite Actor: Denzel Washington

Favourite Actress: Kim Basinger

Favourite Music: Makossa & Zouk Love Creole music

Favourite Soccer Boots: Boots which can score goals

Favourite Holiday Spots: Hawaii

Routine Before Game: Being a Christian, I always pray before the game

Favourite Nightspots: Champs Elysees in Paris, Waves, Cargo, Heaven & the Royal in Adelaide

Languages Spoken: French, English, Douala

What do you miss about home when you are away? The food & the family

What do you like wearing when you're not wearing soccer strips? Calvin Klein, 501's, Timberlands

What's your idea of a romantic night out? Start by going to a Chinese restaurant or Italian Cafe. If it's a stormy night we might go to the beach and do what romantic people do.

Do you smoke? No

Do you drink? No

Favourite TV Program: Entertainment Tonight

What type of car do you drive? Very old car - ex racing car

What is your soccer ambition? To play at the highest level possible and to one day be one of the best Soccer players in the world ●





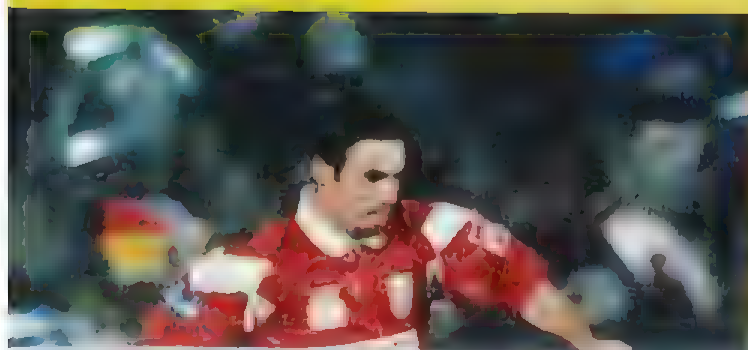
Despite the continuing player drain overseas the 1994/95 NSL season has seen a lot of top soccer. Soccer Australia looks at six players for whom this season has been memorable - with more to come.

1 MATTHEW HORSLEY (Wollongong Wolves)
Centre: The ball playing midfielder has been one of the revelations of a workmanlike Wollongong side. Horsley's contribution has made the Wolves a serious Top Six challenger and seen him grab a Coca-Cola Socceroo squad place for the first time as well as the captain's armband at his club.

2 JOHN GIBSON (Adelaide City)
 When Gibbo transferred from Sydney United at the beginning of the season there were those who said he wouldn't make it with the Zebras, that he would go the way of Michael Reda who was a big-bucks flop when he moved from Parramatta Eagles last season. Instead, Gibson has proven his doubters wrong and after a settling-in period has looked one of the classiest players in the league.



six



of the best



Soccer Australia

3 CYRILLE NDONGO-KELLER (West Adelaide)
A brilliant ball player when in form and plays his football in the Raul Blanco mould - all class. Became the first non New Zealand import to be capped while playing in the NSL when called up by Cameroon. One of the reasons behind West Ad's successful run this season.

4 STEVE MAUTONE (South Melbourne)
His season looked doomed for disaster when, after transferring from Morwell Falcons, he found himself dumped from the Blues first team. But a return to form coincided with a brilliant run of success from South Melbourne. Now Mautone is back at his best and showing the sort of form that saw Eddie Thomson draft him into the Coca-Cola Socceroo set-up against Milan two seasons back.

5 STEVE HORVAT (Melbourne Knights)
His contribution to the game is often overlooked because of the feats of Mark Viduka but Horvat is getting better all the time. He looks composed in even the tightest situations and his form was one of the reasons why the Knights let Biskic go to Malaysian club, Selangor. A brilliant dead ball specialist.

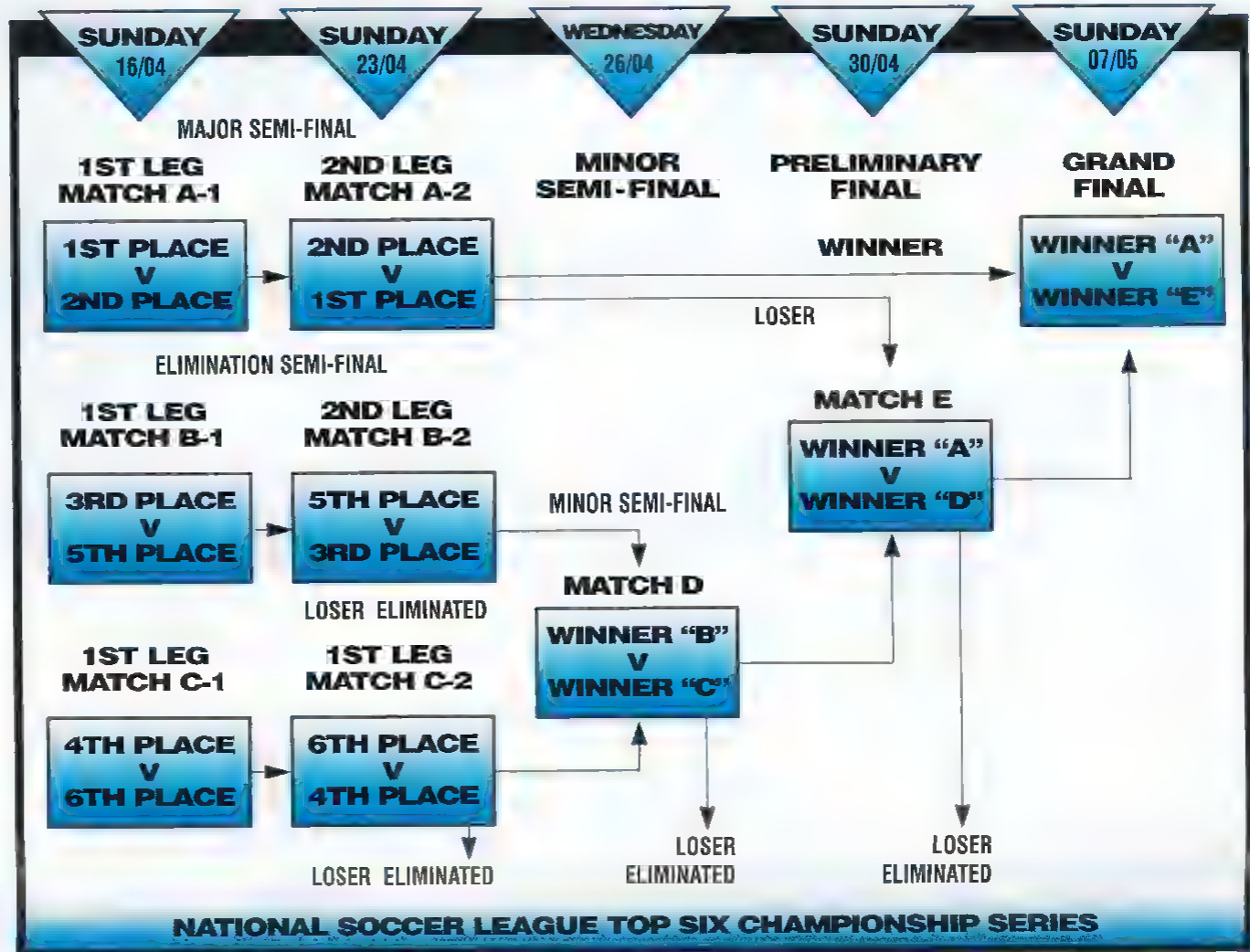
6 ANTE MILICIC (Sydney United)
Maybe the best ball player in Australia when he is in form. Often lacks consistency and tends to drift out of games. But his return to form has been marked by Sydney United's best run of the season. Combines well with his partner in crime, Ante Moric, and could yet force his way into the Coca-Cola Olyroo side.



The Top Six is here again, it's time to concentrate on making the BIG ONE

It's time for business

The finals play-off system has always been something of a controversial subject in Australian soccer with many involved in the game clamouring for a return to the European style of first past the post. But there is little doubt that the finals system has been a success and is very definitely here to stay. The crowds of last season were ample proof that the fans will turn out for top class soccer. They have given a vote of confidence to the Top Six by turning up in record numbers and with this year's play-offs here again thoughts have turned to Championship honours once again.



Last year, despite a healthy near 14,000 crowd, the Grand Final itself was a bit of a fizzle - but there had been plenty of action in the earlier rounds. In the opening stage Sydney United and Sydney Olympic took surprise first leg leads over their opponents, Adelaide City and Marconi. Both City and Marconi reversed the scores in the second leg fixture, Adelaide doing it the hard way away from home. Melbourne Knights moved into the Grand Final with a 2-1 win and 2-2 draw with their arch rivals, South Melbourne, but they had to wait until the last four minutes of the second leg to seal their spot. Almost predictably the name of Mark Viduka appeared on the scoresheet.

But in the next two rounds Zoran Matic's Zebras really got rolling, demolishing both Marconi (3-1) and South Melbourne (2-0) on the way to yet another meet-up with Melbourne Knights. The style with which Melbourne Knights had won the Premiership made them raging hot favourites to win in their home town. Both clubs were hailed as the teams of the 90s but Melbourne Knights surely had the edge - after all they had won two previous Premierships, only to end up as Grand Final bridesmaids. Surely this time it would be different. History tells us it wasn't, the Knights young crusaders froze and Damian Mori scored maybe the best Grand Final goal in history when his 35 yard pile driver almost ripped through the back of the net.

But going into the 1995 version, and with still a lot of issues to be settled, it looks as if there are three fancied

teams - Melbourne Knights, Adelaide Sydney and the young guns from Edensor Park, Sydney United. The other contenders have all shown a degree of inconsistency at the wrong time of the season, the business end.

There are several potential intriguing clashes waiting soccer-hungry fans this year. Will it be the year of Zeljko Kalac, the brilliant Sydney United keeper who has booked his passage to full-time European football? Will it be the stage for the devastating Mark Viduka to set his talents alight? Viduka is arguably the best ever Australian-born striker and he will also join Kalac on the rich playing fields of Europe. Or will Damian Mori steal the show again? 'Frogger's' team mate John Gibson will also relish the chance to knock out his former buddies at Sydney United. Or is it the turn of a 'non-metropolitan' club.

In the history of the NSL the only club to break the stranglehold of the Sydney-Melbourne-Adelaide triangle has been Brisbane City which lost the 1979 Grand Final to Sydney City by the odd goal over two legs. Since then Sydney have had 17 finalists, Melbourne 6 and Adelaide 4. All four of those Adelaide appearances have been made by the Zebras who have also made a hat-trick of appearances in the last three Grand Finals.

Only Marconi, with five all-time appearances, have a better record and City would dearly love to notch their club name into the record books.

Of the non-metro clubs Wollongong Wolves look to have the best credentials with the exciting Matt

Horsley playing his best ever football and the lethal partnership of Vaughn Coveney and on-loan Adrian Cervinski scoring regularly up front.

Sentimentally, it would be a great occasion if Sydney United could be matched up against their sister club, Melbourne Knights, in a Grand Final which would be billed as the 'farewell of the stars', two great stars of the modern Aussie game, Zeljko Kalac and Mark Viduka. The attendance record of 26,352, set in 1990 by Marconi and Sydney Olympic, could even be under threat.

But which ever club makes it to the showpiece event of the season it is a great occasion for the players themselves. Even in the early stage games the crowds are far bigger than the normal league fare and the atmosphere of a knockout cup also adds to the tension, and the Grand Final gives the clubs the opportunity to play in front of their biggest crowd of the season. That is something which players all over the world treasure. It is also something which separates the boys from the men when big occasion Grand Final nerves have a big say in the outcome of Aussie soccer's showpiece.

All the Grand Final Results 1978-1994

1978 Sydney City 4 (Smith, Watson, Trenter, Campbell) Marconi 2 (Ollerton, Vieri)

1979 1st Leg Sydney City 1 (M Silva) Brisbane City 0

2nd Leg Brisbane City 1 (Kelso) Sydney City 1 (Trenter)

1980 Heidelberg 4 (Cole 3, Paton) Sydney City 0

1982 St George 3 (Marton 3) Sydney City 1 (Kosminaj)

1985 1st Leg Sydney City 0 Brunswick 1 (Incantalupo)

2nd Leg Brunswick 1 (Incantalupo) Sydney City 0

1986 1st Leg Adelaide City 0 Sydney Olympic 1 (Spyridakos)

2nd Leg Sydney Olympic 1 (Johnstone) Adelaide City 3 (Melta, Villani, Maxwell)

1987 St George 4 APIA 0

1988 Marconi 1 (2) (Calderan, Nastevski) Sydney United 1 (2) (Hunter, Lamond)

Marconi won in a penalty shoot out after extra time

1989 Marconi 1 (Nastevski) Sydney Olympic 0

1990 Marconi 0 Sydney Olympic 2 (Edwards, Ironside)

1991 South Melbourne 1 (Palatsides) Melbourne Knights 1

South Melbourne won in a penalty shoot out after extra time

1992 Adelaide City 0 Melbourne Knights 0

Adelaide won in a penalty shoot out after extra time.

1993 Marconi 1 (Harper 52) Adelaide City 0

1994 Melbourne Knights 0 Adelaide City 1 (Mori) ●

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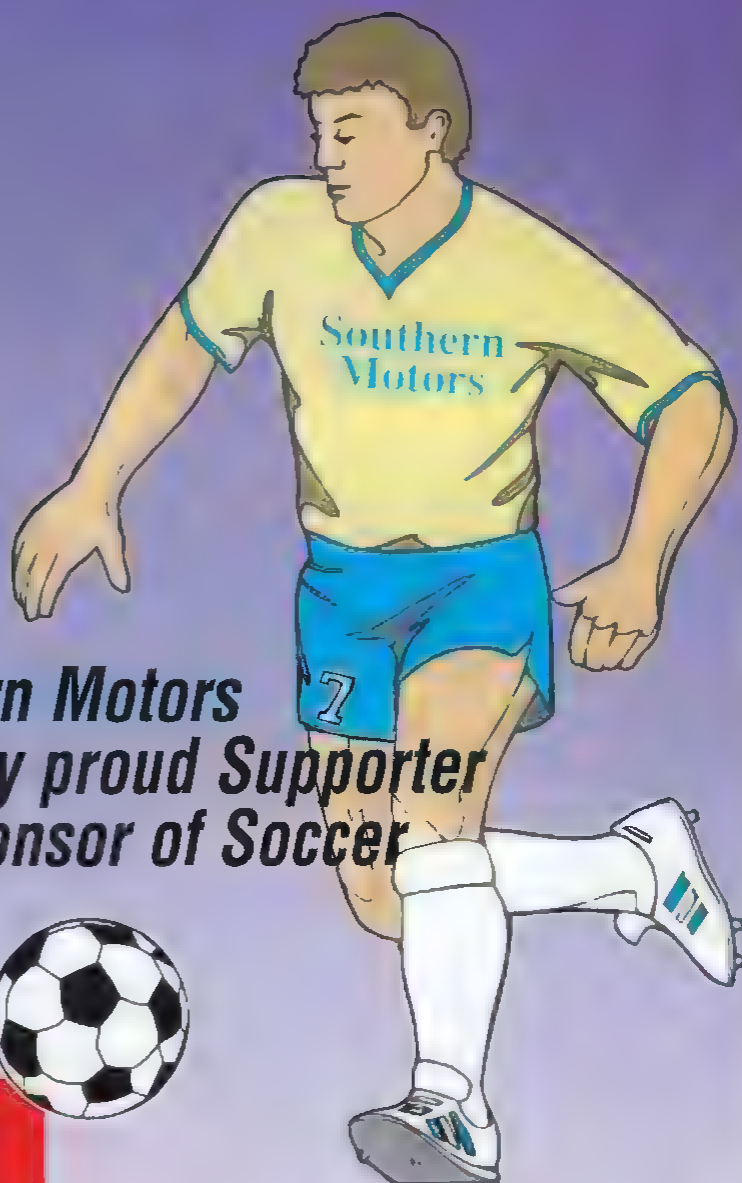
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Head of the class

The Australian Institute of Sport is the nearest we have to a soccer factory. Its graduates are devotees of one of the finest youth schemes in the world, under the careful guidance of 'head teacher', Ron Smith.

Ask anybody who knows anything about soccer, they'll tell you - you have to have been a good player to be a good coach. Good coaches are all former internationals with a cupboard full of caps. But in the heart of Canberra's bushland suburb of Bruce there is a little Englishman who is knocking six out of that theory. For Ron Smith isn't just a good coach, he is Head of the Class - and his role at the AIS is to produce the next generation of Australian internationals.

That differs totally from the role of most club coaches in Australia whose jobs are totally results-orientated. ALL Smith has to do is to get his players in the national youth teams. "If a club has players selected to play for Australia then that is fine," he says. "They don't have to develop them with that end in sight - and even some club coaches might think it a hindrance to their own jobs when their players are selected. In many ways I feel sorry for clubs when they lose players to the National Youth team but at least we have a system whereby we can postpone matches when the senior players are picked. Look at Rugby League - the Canberra Raiders can lose half of their team for State of Origin or Kangaroo games and they still have to play their matches.

Smith is a success, there is no doubt of that. The NSL is stack full of his proteges who are a walking, and running testament to his ability, as well as some of the major clubs of Europe. "Out of the squad that Les Scheinflug named for the World Youth Cup, eleven out of

Hotspur, but that is about as far as his professional ambitions went. From White Hart Lane, Smith's next stop was non-League football, along with the hundreds of disillusioned apprentices who make the same journey each year.

But Smith has found his niche as a coach, particularly at the AIS where he has the chance to put his ideas into action. "We try to give the players an all round football education here," he explains. "I analyse their faults and then try and work on them. I would like to think that when they leave here they are better all-round players. To do that we change our systems around a bit or play the lads in different positions. By exposing them to different match situations we develop their overall abilities as players."

Over the years the list of AIS graduates who have made appearances for Australia in either junior or senior international is impressive. It is also growing annually. "My job is to produce young players who are good enough to play in youth internationals," says Smith. "League results aren't all that important, although the AIS has always fielded a very competitive team. It is the environment and what you are trying to achieve that is different here. If you are a National League coach then your head is on the block to get results. You might have to be a bit more conservative in what you are trying to get your players to achieve in the short term. The key factor, however, is always selecting players to do the job that you want them to do."

"In the game today a player is expected to do a lot, he is expected to cover as well as push forward. Really the days of the out-and-out defender or attacker are over."

the eighteen have been through the AIS," he says. "That's almost two thirds and when you consider that lads like Craig Moore (now playing first team with Glasgow Rangers), who 1990 I selected to come here in 1990, would also have been in this age group as well as John Aloisi (who has pulled out so that he won't jeopardise his non-foreigner status in Europe), it could have been a lot more."

Success turns many heads, and there are those in the game with far fewer successes than the Head of the Class who will tell you just how good they are. But Ron Smith doesn't rank in that number and instead is a likeable Londoner with a big smile. He is also a former youth player at Tottenham

At first sight it might seem that Ron Smith has an easy job, just to select kids from a five star-rated youth talent identification system, take them into the AIS for a year or two and then sit back and watch as the cream of Australia's youngsters eventually finds its way into the National League and ultimately, the Coca-Cola Socceroos. The list of players like Ned Zelic, Jason van Blerk, Jason Polak, Mark Viduka and Stevie Corica is proof that the system works. But it does little to reflect Smith's own views on the game.

"I don't believe that the modern player has to cover the entire width of the field," he says. "In the game today a player is expected to do a lot, he is expected to cover as well as push for-



ward. Really the days of the out-and-out defender or attacker are over. The wing wizard is a thing of the past and I don't think we will ever see players again who are given the space to roam down the touch line, beat two or three defenders and then knock the ball over for the centre forward.

"When I played non-League in England we had Gordon Hill in our team. His speciality was as a pure winger. He was absolutely brilliant. The he went to Manchester United and was a huge star. But when the manager changed he was dropped - because the game was changing and his style of play wasn't what was wanted anymore.

Players today have to be far more mobile, they have to defend too.

"But I don't think that we have to use the whole width of the pitch in the modern game. I have discussed my ideas with a lot of coaches, and most of them just stare at me blankly when I say that. After all, we are always shouting about using width. But I believe that we don't have to stretch our forward line out across the entire width of the pitch. If we bring the play in about ten yards then we can still use width - but in that unit. That way our players are a lot closer to each other and they find it easier to play a pass or make a move.

"That might sound radical but a lot of the top teams in the world, like Brazil, actually play like that. Whenever

anyone gives me that doubting look I just put on a video - and I have dozens of tapes which prove my point.

"It also means that we have to teach our players new skills, skills which they can use in tight ball situations. That is probably the next stage of Australia's soccer development which we still have to achieve - the ability of our players to play in tight situations. That separates good players from great players."

Ron Smith is brim full of ideas on how to play the game - some of them well accepted, some of them highly controversial like his 'tight width theory'. At the Australian Institute of Sport he has certainly had the opportunity to test those theories out, and his pupils have been worthy of their instruction.

But that doesn't mean that his ambitions are limited to coaching Australia's best youngsters. Already a host of overseas countries have studied the Institute's programme and Ron Smith has recently returned from a symposium in the United States where he was one of the main speakers on this very subject. As such he has a deserved world-wide reputation. However, a love for Australia will more than likely see him remain in this country - unless he gets an offer which is too good to refuse.

But a good bet might be that he eventually ends up as coach at a National Soccer League club, one where the club has plenty of vision to produce the kind of football that had Smith standing on the terraces of White Hart Lane as a youngster, the kind of football which would be recognised as innovative and free-flowing. That could be the offer which Ron Smith, Head of the Class, would find too good to refuse. ●

Sydney United star midfielder Ante Moric is facing up to the realities of a part time soccer player with

Full time ambitions

"I've got to be looking at full time football soon," says United midfielder Ante Moric. "It really is hard fitting in my game and a job. Next season, I'll definitely be looking for a move to Europe."

That doesn't mean that Ante Moric is unhappy at Sydney United, far from it, but instead he is just facing up to one of the realities that many young Aussie players have to - whether to stay on in Australia, or shoot for the stars in the European professional leagues.

Not that it is all glamour over there either, ask Graham Arnold or Aurelio Vidmar about some of the Belgian clubs. They survive on crowds smaller than an average NSL club and constantly sell off their talented youngsters to balance the club books. But it is still full time football, it still gives the player a chance to show himself on a full time stage. And it still gives that player the opportunity to say, 'hey, I'm good enough to play full time - now come and get me.'

Look at Robbie Slater. His early move into European football didn't warrant a special chapter being written but he had the chance to show his talents on a bigger platform and now he is making a reported \$9,000 a week, plus bonus, at English side Blackburn Rovers. That's not bad for a former Sydney United player and it's that sort of chance that Moric is after.

"There isn't the sort of money available in Australia to live as a full time professional footballer," says Moric. "That's why I have to give it a try next season. Australian players that do go full time in the NSL make a big sacrifice. It's all about doing your best and at the end of the day if you get a chance then you have to take that chance."

The young Olyroo midfielder isn't necessarily waiting for some flash talent scout to come his way with a big offer either, instead he is preparing it to do it the hard way by going on trial around various different clubs. Aussie striker Davie Mitchell did that some time ago when he literally knocked on the door of Scottish giants Glasgow Rangers and asked for a trial. The Ibrox club duly obliged and Big Davie wrote himself a full time contract.

But Moric hasn't any sights set on Rangers where former Young Socceroo team-mate Craig Moore is such a big hit. "No, I've been to Scotland," says the player who has an admitted fondness for French and German football. It was good to play in but I don't want to live there."

Ante has already had a couple of serious discussions about possible football in Europe when he toured with the Olyroos in mid year but he is still prepared to do what is necessary - even without a gilt edged offer. "If you

have got the confidence then you have to be prepared to get out there and do it," he finishes.

With that sort of confidence Australian soccer fans could well be following the fortunes of the young star in a colder climate this time next year. ●



Ante Moric in action in the Olyroo strip.



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the Jleague the Jleague the Jleague the Jleague Asian Invasion

Steve Darby is the ASF National Development Officer. Like a lot of football supporters he has taken a keen interest in the recent friendships between J League clubs and their NSL counterparts. Here he takes a look at the J League and what it has to offer our own local scene.

If you had asked even the most ardent soccer supporter in Australia only five years ago to name a Japanese soccer team you might have got answers such as Tokyo, Hyundai or Seiko. Now it is different, for in the last three years there has been an ever-increasing number of Japanese teams that have come to Australia in either pre-season or in their unique mid-season break.

The J League is played in two separate mini seasons and the winner of each mini season plays off in the Japanese equivalent of the Grand Final. This double break allows the national teams at all levels to play prestigious international fixtures such as the recent challenge match against Australia or their own prestigious tournament, the Kirin Cup.

The idea of J League teams coming to Australia started with Grampus Eight who trained in Tasmania in 1993. Of course, the big attraction for that visit was the appearance of England international Gary Lineker.

David Smith, General Manager of Soccer Tasmania, and one of the masterminds behind this early visit said: "It was a tremendous boost for soccer in Tasmania and it gave our elite players an opportunity to play against international professionals. Also it got soccer on TV and on the back page of Tasmanian newspapers - something that is normally impossible here. The local economy also benefited by the massive influx of players, staff and journalists. In total over 200 people came on the visit and, of course, Tasmania was beamed back to potential tourists in Japan. We will welcome back Japanese teams any day, they were certainly great ambassadors for the game."

Grampus Eight returned again in 1994, this time with Gary Lineker plus Dragan Stojkovic, the Yugoslavian superstar, as well as coach Gordon Milne, the ex Liverpool and England star. Other teams have played and trained in other centres throughout Australia and some very strong relationships are being formed.

Recently teams such as Gamba Osaka, JEF United, Flugels, FC Pulse, Sanfrecce and Jubilo Iwata (including 1990 Italian World Cup star, Toto Schillaci) have also used our facilities for their pre-season preparations.

These visits have great potential for the Australian game. The chance for our elite players to play against Japanese professionals (and the reality is that our players have compared very favourably) and to play against world class stars. Even if some of these players are in their decline it is still a great honour for any player to say that he has marked Lineker, or kept Schillaci goal-less - there is nothing wrong with playing against a star whose photo-



There is no doubt that the relationship between Australia and Asia will continue and strengthen and that both sides will benefit in a multitude of ways. Who knows, in 2005 a fixture list may read Marconi v Sanfrecce, Jubilo Iwata v Adelaide City, South Melbourne v Selangor.

graph you had pinned up on your bedroom wall. In the case of Stojkovic it was a delight to watch him play and he certainly did things on the pitch that any player would have been in awe of.

There is also the benefit for local coaches to watch international coaches in action. Wim Jansen, the star of the 1978 Holland World Cup team, was coach of Sanfrecce and a number of local coaches watched his sessions which were based on the Dutch FA method. Gamba Osaka visited Canberra with their coach, Siggi Held, who won a World Cup runners-up medal in 1966 with West Germany and also played in the 1970 winning side.

Another major benefit for the local game is to observe the professionalism of the clubs. Admittedly the J League clubs were backed by corporate giants such as Yamaha or Mazda, but they invest their wealth wisely in capital equipment which is all geared towards optimum performance for the playing and coaching staff. An example of their administrative professionalism was Tsuneo Ito, the International Manager of Sanfrecce Hiroshima, who takes care of all the preparation for coach Wim Jansen. Beside being fluent in English he also had an encyclopaedic knowledge of world soccer. When he was in Australia he took every opportunity to

examine every aspect of our game with the intention of applying what he found useful to his own club. He was an example of a true professional who was prepared to continue developing his own knowledge.

This continuing friendly relationship with J League clubs has paid off and a formal relationship between the two national associations has developed with international matches being played at youth, female and senior level. Also, a National Club Super Challenge is being planned for the winners of each national league, which will be a great boost for the winners of our own NSL.

Obviously Asia is not just Japan and the NSW Soccer Federation has also developed strong relationships with the Korean FA and has played a number of matches against their Korean equivalents. Also, forward thinking by the Soccer NSW administration has led to many overseas teams using the excellent NSW complex at Parklea on the western outskirts of Sydney.

Peter Gray, President of Soccer NSW and one of the forerunners for Asian relationships, is very supportive of Asian developments. "Soccer NSW is delighted with our strong relationship with Korea," he said. "It has developed over a number of years and is built on mutual trust and respect. We have had a number of tremendous games against the Korean Industrial League representative team (State League parity) and we are negotiating with both North and South Korean soccer authorities with a view to a four way home and away tournament.

"That is another way in which soccer can cement relationships and overcome political barriers. We will also be sending a representative to Asia to further publicise our Parklea complex, as all the feedback we have had is that the complex is exactly what Asian teams want, both in facilities and the attention to details such as diet that our staff can give. In an economic sense the 'import' dollars

earned from this venture are ploughed back into the facility which in turn means that the facilities will be further improved for the benefit of our own young players."

There is no doubt that the relationship between Australia and Asia will continue and strengthen and that both sides will benefit in a multitude of ways. Who knows, in 2005 a fixture list may read Marconi v Sanfrecce, Jubilo Iwata v Adelaide City, South Melbourne v Selangor etc. etc. The potential of bigger crowds and corporate dollars will mean that we can keep many of our Australian stars in the country and give them the status that they deserve. ●

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Premier's XI (Not in order of appearance): Michael Curcio, Mark Triffitt (Captain), Bill Renehan, Melinda Marty, Alan Clark, Mario Maldoni, Tom Zelic, Sal Cappello, Jim Gerostamoulos, Ricardo Alvarez, Billy Wright, Bruno Condello, Jim Kirrakopolous, Stephen Vassilakis, Jack Riley, Premier of Victoria Jeff Kennett (Coach).



- ① The Victorian Premier's "Grand Prix" team – in the match which served as a curtain-raiser between Melbourne Knights vs Adelaide City – victorious against the Media before and a crowd of approximately 10,000.
- ② Brisbane Striker's defence assisted by the excellent saves of keeper Bolton Clint have achieved the record of the least goals in the NSL – or close to.
- ③ Marconi Striker-superstar Steve Corica, back after several trials with German side F.C. Cologne is once again in his playing mood. He has played 16 games for the *Coca-Cola Socceroos* including 7 A Internationals and now looking forward to the series of games against Ghana.
- ④ The Premier of Victoria – Jeff Kennett – lifts with pride the Trophy of the now established Premier's XI v Media tournament.
- ⑤ Melbourne Knights mid-fielder David Cervinski applies pressure on Adelaide City keeper Jason Petkovic.





The ⁶ two lethal strikers of the National Soccer League. Top goalscorer for the second year in a row, Melbourne Knights Mark "Bomber" Viduka and runner-up Damien Mori for Adelaide City.

Mark Viduka in an aerial dual with Adelaide City and Socceroo defender Alex Tobin. ⁷

"I've told you to always maintain advantage, as I do. I'll not accept a defeat, just remember that." – Jeff Kennett coach for the Premier's XI managed a 6-1 win over the media and challenged every Premier around the country for a soccer match against his formidable XI. ⁸

It turned into a rather unfortunate ⁹ year for South Melbourne star Francis Awaritife who saw himself join the long queue of casualties of the South Melbourne S.C. Medical Clinic.



The Media Team: Peter Desira, (head of delegation) John Miles, Justin Braiser, Sam Prenesti, David Beard, Michael Schiavello, Bert Van Bedaf, Roberto Savio, Paul Williams, Harry Michael, Rocco Di Zio, (Team Manager), Michael Zappone, Sebastian Italia, John Mangan, Debbie Nichols, Adrian De Wit, Roberto Vecchiato (Coach), Daniel Sofia, Angelo Sticca, Robert Cianflone, Ettore Flacco (Captain).

PHOTO BRUNO SILVERI

The women's national team have become Australia's second-ever soccer team to make a World Cup final. Bruce Campbell recently took a look behind the scenes at the

Female **Socceroos**

Rale Rasic did it in '74, Frank Arok missed out by a tartan whisker in '86 and Eddie Thomson was recently 'Diego-ed' by a freak goal but Tommy Sermanni, a quiet little Scot from the sleepy city of Canberra, has added his name to Australia's miniscule list of coaches who have taken their teams to the World Cup finals. Maybe the women's national team don't attract the same publicity that their brothers do but don't tell them they are in any way inferior - as I found out when I accepted an invitation to join them in camp for a day's training at the Australian Institute of Sport.

"We are all really proud of our achievement in making the finals of the World Cup in Sweden," says Sermanni. "It is a tremendous achievement. But the real pleasing thing about this lot is that we have also managed to start a good talent identification scheme at junior level. By the time of the next World Cup we should start to see the fruits of that."

Sermanni doesn't treat his players any differently from any other players he has coached, either. And that includes the likes of Ned Zelic who he 'discovered' as a raw kid at Canberra Metros. Since then he has also had a spell as coach at NSL Sydney Olympic but confesses to a real liking for his current job. "They are a great bunch to work with," he admits. "Really, they're

just like any other football team - they have their own share of personalities and characters within the squad."

And on the day that I joined the girls they were being put through the AIS physical test - a nightmare series of ever increasing short sprints which is designed to sort out the weak from the strong. That plus skills training, practice matches and individual exercises makes their routine just as hard as any men's team - and harder than some even in the NSL big time. "Fit?", says Sermanni, "you can bet you're life they are fit. But once they leave our camps it is really up to them to continue their own training and in most cases their individual club routines just aren't enough. That is one of the very real problems that we have,

we don't have a national league to keep the standard up."

So what do we call the women's national team on their quest for World Cup glory? The Female Socceroos, the Socceroos, the Walleroos, the Jillaroos or what? One of the players best summed up the current debate saying: "I don't care, I just want to go out and play for Australia." And while the great debate continues its business as usual for Tommy's girls. That means preparing them for Sweden with the clock ticking away faster than some would like. Sermanni himself must be having a few nightmares after a draw ceremony which grouped the Aussies with Denmark, China and current world champions, the USA.

"It wasn't a great draw," says Sermanni with a huge amount of understatement. "We were hoping that we could have got a couple of weaker teams but it hasn't worked out that way. Australia will just have to go out there and do it's very best."

The target is the more realistic one of making the last eight which will see Australia qualify for the Atlanta Olympics where women's soccer has been included on the roster as a special event for the first time ever. USA's predominance in the world of women's soccer is the reason behind that inclusion, with the Yanks (or is it the Yankettes) looking every bit a Gold Medal chance even at this stage. A top eight spot is still a tough assignment but one in which Sermanni's Sheilas must excel. At stake is the future of women's soccer as a top international sport, at least in this country. For with the 2000 Olympics to be held in Sydney the female national team must push our ratings up the world ladder to see the sport included.

"We played USA on tour a few months back," says the coach, "and they really brought the players down to earth with a thump. Simply put, they were just too good for us in nearly every department and gave us a couple of hidings. But that was just what we

needed. It made the players realise just how far we still have to go. It was the sort of preparation that Australia really needed rather than play our Pacific neighbours and win easily. If we had to get slaughtered by America then it was better to happen in a friendly - and with time to go away and work on a few things."

Sermanni himself will likely be facing another major problem fairly soon, one which his success at women's national coach has heightened. In a country where good young coaches are scarcer than tabloid soccer coverage, his name figures in nearly every coaching vacancy conversation. "I've got security with his job," he says, "and I really like my work. Also, I get to live in Canberra which for my family is important." Does that mean that he would be a good bet for the Canberra Cosmos spot? "I don't know," he adds. "I have been spoken to but really just now I am concentrating on doing well in the World Cup. Soccer at NSL level changes so much that it isn't as attractive as a lot of people might think."

So in the meantime Sermanni is placing all his energies to plotting the next stage of the Aussies' World Cup campaign. With USA sitting as tournament favourites and second seed group team China just behind them, Australia's best chance of qualifying for the quarter finals, and a place at Atlanta, is by edging out Denmark - in itself no mean feat. Senior international Julie Murray spent some time in Denmark playing in their semi-pro league and rates the standard very high. "The Danish team will be hard to beat," she says. "They are strong and have the obvious benefits of a national league while we only have weaker state leagues."

But beating Denmark still rates as Australia's best chance and the meticulous Sermanni will be using Murray's experience to compile a comprehensive dossier on the Danes - leaving no stone unturned as the Female Socceroos push for that elusive place in the sun. ●

stay on the ball stay on the ball



subscribe pg 6

posterpage ➤ female socceroos

BackRow: Susan Read, Sara King, Sunni Hughes, Denie Pentecost, Sarah Cooper, Michelle Prouten, Tracey Wheeler, Denise Lofthouse. **FrontRow:** Kim Lembryk, Jane Oakley, Julie Murray (Captain), Anissa Tann (Vice Captain), Lisa Casagrande, Traci Bartlett, Lisa Dunne, Kaylene Janssen, Sonia Gegenhuber. ●

Bound for Sweden



BackRow: Susan Read, Sara King, Sunni Hughes, Denie Pentecost, Sarah Cooper, Michelle Prouten, Tracey Wheeler, Denise Lofthouse. **FrontRow:** Kim Lembryk, Jane Oakley, Julie Murray (Captain), Anissa Tann (Vice Captain), Lisa Casagrande, Traci Bartlett, Lisa Dunne, Kaylene Janssen, Sonia Gegenhuber.

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Round 13

Sydney United 1 (Rudan)
Morwell Falcons 1 (Bothwell)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,480
Referee: Mr J Papanicolas

Melbourne Knights 3
(De Amicis, Tiatto, Viduka)
South Melbourne 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 7,448
Referee: E Brazzale

Melbourne SC 3
(Trajkovski, Zinni, Enes)
Heidelberg United 0
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 2,250
Referee: J Markovski

Wollongong City 4
(Coveny 2, Horsley, Ackers)
Sydney Olympic 1 (Augerinos)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 4,200
Referee: S Micallef

Brisbane Strikers 2
(Slater, Hunter)
Marconi-Fairfield 1
(De Marigny)
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 3,487
Referee: D Crawford

West Adelaide 2
(Hooker, Cardozo)
Adelaide City 1 (Mullen)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 9,309
Referee: E Lennie

Round 14

Morwell Falcons 2
(Spink, Ferreira)
Heidelberg United 1
(Despotovski)
Venue: Morwell Stadium
Attendance: 1,937
Referee: Mr J Rutter

Sydney Olympic 1 (Johnston)
Parramatta Eagles 2
(Sprod, G Gunning)
Venue: Leichhardt Stadium
Attendance: 4,200
Referee: Mr C Diomis

Melbourne Knights 0
Wollongong City 1 (Bradley)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 2,500
Referee: Mr G Connolly

South Melbourne 1 (Petersen)
Brisbane Strikers 0
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 4,393
Referee: Mr B Hugo

Adelaide City 3
(Mori, Lozanovski, Melta)
Sydney United 0
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 4,500
Referee: Mr J Fraser

Marconi-Fairfield 0
West Adelaide 0
*Marconi won on penalties
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 4,196
Referee: Mr D Prentice

Round 15

Melbourne SC 0
Morwell Falcons 0
*Melbourne SC won in a
penalty shoot out
Venue: Olympic Park

Attendance: 1m261
Referee: C Naumcevski

Wollongong City 2 (Coveny 2)
Marconi-Fairfield 2
(Corica, van Egmond)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 3,561
Referee: C Diomis

Brisbane Strikers 0
Melbourne Knights 1 (Biskic)
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 4,934
Referee: D Prentice

Parramatta Eagles 0
Adelaide City 1 (Mori)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 3,472
Referee: E Lennie

West Adelaide 3
(Haniotis, Cardozo 2)
Sydney Olympic 1 (Smith)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 2,903
Referee: J Papanicolas

Heidelberg United 1
(Despotovski)
South Melbourne 3
(Boutsianis 2, Trimboli)
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 10,675
Referee: E Brazzale

Round 16

Melbourne SC 1 (Ngata)
Adelaide City 0
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 4,568
Referee: Mr E Brazzale
(Melbourne)

Parramatta Eagles 0
Marconi-Fairfield 1 (Smith)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 4,568
Referee: Mr N Jones (Newcastle)

Sydney United 1 (Popovic)
Sydney Olympic 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 5,089
Referee: Mr B Hugo
(Newcastle)

Wollongong City 2
(Bradley, A Cervinski)
Brisbane Strikers 0
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 2,881
Referee: Mr J Fraser
(Melbourne)

Morwell Falcons 2
(Markovski, Canosa)
South Melbourne 2 (Kelic 2)
South Melbourne won in a
penalty tie breaker
Venue: Morwell Stadium
Attendance: 6,500
Referee: Mr G Connolly
(Melbourne)

West Adelaide 1 (Iriarte)
Melbourne Knights 1 (own goal)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 4,500
Referee: Mr S Micallef
(Sydney)

Round 17

Adelaide City 0
Heidelberg United 0
*Heidelberg United won in a
penalty shoot out
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 2,900
Referee: M Ingham

Marconi-Fairfield 0
Sydney United 1 (Milicic)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 5,425
Referee: S Micallef
Melbourne Knights 1
(D Cervinski)
Parramatta Eagles 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,000
Referee: G Connolly

Sydney Olympic 2
(Maloney, own goal)
Melbourne SC 3
(Tricarico, Zinni, Ngata)
Venue: Leichhardt Oval
Attendance: 2,400
Referee: D Prentice

Brisbane Strikers 2 (Zoricich 2)
West Adelaide 2
(Ndongo Keller, Hooker)
*Brisbane Strikers won in a
penalty shoot out
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 2,600
Referee: N Jones

South Melbourne 3
(Boutsianis, Kelic, won goal)
Wollongong City 1 (A Cervinski)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 3,936
Referee: E Lennie

Round 18

Parramatta Eagles 1 (Gunning)
Brisbane Strikers 4
(Slater 2, Zoricich, R Brown)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 2,729
Referee: Mr S Micallef

Heidelberg United 2 (Vlahos,
Despotovski)
Sydney Olympic 0
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 2,632
Referee: Mr C Naumcevski

Melbourne SC 1 (Tricarico)
Marconi-Fairfield 1 (Iocca)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 1,485
Referee: Mr J. Rutter

West Adelaide 0
Wollongong City 4 (Boniteg,
Cervinski, Coveny, Horsley)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,2900
Referee: Mr G Connolly

Sydney United 2
Melbourne Knights 2
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,985
Referee: J Fraser

Round 19

Marconi-Fairfield 4
(Iocca 3, Taliadoros)
Heidelberg United 2
(Psarros, Tsolakis)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 3,148
Referee: Mr D Crawford

Melbourne Knights 2
(Viduka, Biskic)
Melbourne SC 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 4,073
Referee: Mr E Lennie

Sydney Olympic 0
Morwell Falcons 1 (Tapai)
Venue: Leichhardt Stadium
Attendance: 1,669

Referee: Mr B Hugo

Wollongong City 4
(Coveny 2, Horsley, Middleby)
Parramatta Eagles 2
(Orlic, Ciantar)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 3,465
Referee: Mr R Lorenc

Round 20

Parramatta Eagles 1 (Gwynne)
West Adelaide 3 (Cardozo,
Hooker, Ndongo-Keller)
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 2,434
Referee: Mr C Diomis

Sydney United 2
(Popovic, Lamond)
Wollongong City 1 (Cervinski)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 3,9005
Referee: Mr B Hugo

Melbourne SC 2 (Zinni 2)
Brisbane Strikers 1 (Hunter)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 1,196
Referee: Mr E Brazzale

Adelaide City 1 (Mori)
South Melbourne 3
(Kelic 2, Trimboli)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,529
Referee: Mr E Lennie

Morwell Falcons 2
(Markovski, Bothwell)
Marconi-Fairfield 3
(Bingley, Taliadoros, Colombo)
Venue: Falcons Stadium
Attendance: 2,268
Referee: Mr J Paponicoulos

Heidelberg United 2
(Despotovski, Tsolakis)
Melbourne Knights 6 (Horvat 2,
Pondeljak, Buljubasic, D
Cervinski, Viduka)
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 3,062
Referee: Mr G Connolly

Round 21

West Adelaide 0
Sydney United 2
(Stanton, Popovic)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 3,111
Referee: Mr M Ingham

Sydney Olympic 0
Adelaide City 2 (Mori, Foster)
Venue: Leichhardt Oval
Attendance: 871
Referee: Mr E Brazzale

Brisbane Strikers 4
(Hunter, Slater, Ditton,
R Brown)
Heidelberg United 1
(Despotovski)
Venue: Perry Park
Attendance: 2,493
Referee: Mr N Jones

Wollongong City 0
Melbourne SC 3
(Enes, Trajceviski, Zinni)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 2,769
Referee: Mr C Diomis

South Melbourne 1
(Panopoulos)
Parramatta Eagles 1
(Haythornwaite)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 4,047

Referee: Mr G Connolly

Melbourne Knights 6
(Viduka 4, Spiteri, Lapsansky)
Morwell Falcons 2 (Tapai 2)
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 4,500
Referee: Mr B Hugo

Round 22

Morwell Falcons 5 (Markovski 2,
Villani, Seven, Waddell)
Brisbane Strikers 1 (R Brown)
Venue: Falcons Stadium
Attendance: 2,081
Referee: Mr G Connolly

Melbourne SC 0 West Adelaide 0
*West Adelaide won on penalties
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 1,646
Referee: Mr C Naumcevski

Heidelberg United 4
(Despotovski 2, Tsolakis 2)
Wollongong City 3
(Coveny, Bonetig 2)
Venue: Olympic Village
Attendance: 909
Referee: Mr J Paponicoulos

Adelaide City 3 (Mullen, Mori 2)
Marconi Fairfield 1 (Corica)
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 4,700
Referee: Mr J Fraser

Sydney United 1 (Kupresak)
Parramatta Eagles 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 4,864
Referee: Mr S Micallef

Sydney Olympic 1 (Tome)
South Melbourne 0
Venue: Leichhardt Park
Attendance: 1,844
Referee: Mr R Lorenc

Round 23

Marconi-Fairfield 0
Sydney Olympic 1 (Poimert)
Venue: Marconi Stadium
Attendance: 4,953
Referee: Mr N Jones

Wollongong City 1 (Ackers)
Morwell Falcons 4 (Miller,
Villani, Spink, Tapai)
Venue: Brandon Park
Attendance: 2,109
Referee: Mr B Hugo

South Melbourne 0
Sydney United 1 (Lamond)
Venue: Olympic Park
Attendance: 2,802
Referee: Mr E Brazzale

Melbourne Knights 2 (Cervinski,
Pondeljak)
Adelaide City 0
Venue: Croatian Sports Centre
Attendance: 7,256
Referee: Mr S Micallef

Parramatta Eagles 3
(Gunning 2, Brayshaw)
Melbourne SC 0
Venue: Melita Stadium
Attendance: 2,006
Referee: Mr D Crawford

West Adelaide 2 (Ndongo-Keller 2)
Heidelberg United 2 (Ardone,
Despotovski)
*West Adelaide won on
penalties
Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium
Attendance: 2,663
Referee: Mr G Connolly ●

COPPA-GOLD



12-Stud sewn-on polyurethane outsole



Self-centring elasticized tongue



Extra long fold-back tongue



Eva insole with arch and heel shock absorber



Non-slip lining

 **lotto**
Italian Sports Design



BackRow: George Haniotis, Robert Slager, Scott Morrison, Peter Blazincic, Anthony Giannasca, Cyrille Ndongo-Keller, José Iriarte, Stan Lazardis. **CentreRow:** Frank Tibaldi, Matthew Galopitos (Gear Steward), Lewis Cooper (Physio), Raul Blanco (Senior Coach), Adrian Santrac (Assistant Coach), Jim Markratzaz (Team Manager), Con Kokkinoplitis. **FrontRow:** Richie Alagich, Mark Brazzale, Jim Keramidas, Robbie Hooker, George Slifkas, Ayrton Andriolo, Pablo Cardozo, Jim Tsekinis. Absent: Neil Plotkis, Chris Ball, Ross Aloisi.

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